Section I

Your Marketing Plan

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# Why Plan

**If you fail to plan . . . you are planning to fail!**

**Benjamin Franklin (1706 – 1790)**

Large companies employ huge numbers of people to carry out the planning activities of the company. Others are employed to monitor the progress of those plans, whilst others are engaged in updating and fine-tuning those plans depending upon the results.

We stated in an earlier section why you should plan but the well known saying above really says it all!

# Making it Simple

We have tried to make the planning of your promotional activity for the coming season as simple as possible . . . just to encourage you to plan!

Section ‘B’ offers you a more definitive planning guide but we believe the basic information covered in this plan for the coming season to be sufficient to not only get you started but, to ensure you have a more successful year than the past season.

Planning should be carried out in conjunction with your budget. It is very easy to spend a huge amount of money on an array of advertising and promotional material . . . spending wisely is considerably more difficult!

In our plan all promotional activity is based on a bi-weekly basis. This method enables us to plan our promotion around our grass cutting customers and regular journeys made each two-weekly period.

Whilst we work our plan on a bi-weekly basis it does not mean that this plan is for existing customers only. This method should assist in minimising travelling time and costs to promote in a specific area.

Again, check out Section ‘B’ to create a good marketing mix of promotional activities that you intend to use in the coming year. If you have other ideas, which have worked for you in the past, use them again . . . and tell your Central Support Team!

***Completing this plan should take no more than ONE HOUR of your time.***

# The Basics

There are only three sections to your plan for this year;

1. Financial
2. Customers
3. Activity

The information required to complete your plan should mainly be right at your fingertips and take no time to complete.

The financial information can be taken from your accounts and very few further calculations are required.

The customer information may take a little longer for some but the majority will already have the information detailed in their niceneasy Office.

The above is what we call BASE INFORMATION and you should always have it readily available and be monitoring on a weekly/ monthly basis.

# The Approach

Shown on the following page is an example of what your yearly marketing and promotional activity might look like. Whilst it does not pretend to be the most sophisticated plan (some may already be producing a more detailed plan), it does provide the opportunity to put things on paper and have an overview of how they may all interlink and, in some cases, crossover.

**An EXAMPLE of a Promotional Overview Plan is shown below;**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **January** | **February** | **March** | **April** | **May** | **June** | **July** | **August** | **September** | **October** | **November** | **December** |
| **Grass Cutting Card** |  |  |  | x | x | x | x | x | x |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Hedge Cutting promotion** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | x | x | x | x | x |  |  |  | x |  |  |  |  |  | x |  |  |
| **Spring Lawn Care** |  |  |  | x | x | x | x |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Summer Lawn Care** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | x | x | x | x | x | x |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Autumn Lawn Care** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | x |  | x |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Christmas Garden Tidy** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | x |  |  | x |  |  |  |
| **Patio/ Driveway Cleaning** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | x |  |  |  | x |
| **Fruit Tree Pruning Campaign** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | x |  |
| **Convert Pay as you go to Standing Order customers** | x | x | x |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Christmas Card** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | x |  |
| **Happy New Year** | x |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Front Page Newspaper or Magazine Advert for Grass Cutting** |  |  |  |  |  | x |  | x |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Inside Page advert for Lawn Care** |  |  |  |  |  |  | x |  | x |  | x |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Inside Page Newspaper or Magazine Advert Christmas Garden Tidy** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | x |  | x |  | x |  |  |

Do not forget to cost each activity and then check against your overall budget!

# Your Template

**nicenstripy Marketing Plan**

**Season: 2011/2012**

**Financials**

Sales Target for the Season 2020/2021 is £

which is an increase of …… % over 2019/2020 season.

Promotional Budget for the Season 2020/2021 is £

Which is ……. % of my projected turnover

**Customers**

Number of regular domestic grass cutting customers at end of 2019/2020 season

Number of regular commercial contracts at end of 2019/2020

Domestic Customers as a percentage of total £’s business at end of 2019/2020 season

Commercial Contracts as a percentage of total £’s business at end of 2019/2020 season.

Other works percentage

Target increase in Domestic Customers 2020/2021

Target increase in Domestic Customers 2020/2021

**Marketing Activity 2020/2021 Season - Overview**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **January** | **February** | **March** | **April** | **May** | **June** | **July** | **August** | **September** | **October** | **November** | **December** |
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# Local Promotion Plan Detail

**February 2020 – This should be THE Minimum if you wish to Grow your Busines**

***Week commencing January 27th***

Complete Work Schedules for existing Customers from niceneasy Office and assess capacity available. Not forgetting fortnightly and weekly variables. Set yourself a target for each day, either financial or quantity of jobs.

If any spare time card in specific areas using your grass cutting card.

***Week Commencing February 3rd***

Prepare and post confirmation letters to all existing customers with start dates and any increased prices.

Continue carding to targeted areas.

***Week Commencing 10th February***

Analyse your work schedule, making note of any cancellations to ascertain areas to target. e.g. if on a Tuesday week 1 you work half a day in Reigate, card roads around your existing jobs in Reigate.

Set targets from daily worksheets to achieve by end of season.

Continue carding to your target areas.

***Week Commencing 17th February***

Complete Scheduling of all Grass Cutting Customers!

Continue Carding as per your target areas.

***Week Commencing February 24th – Week One***

This is week one of grass cutting rounds.

Card 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 opposite.

Continue with carding main target areas

**March**

***Week Commencing 2nd March – Week Two***

Check last year’s niceneasy Office/diary for ‘first of season one off cuts’. Contact customers to schedule in to your work schedules over next two weeks.

Continue carding 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite . . . it shows reliability!

Continue carding to targeted areas if time allows.

***Week Commencing 9th March – Week One***

Check niceneasy Office/dairy for one off tidy-up’s and contact customers. If work gained schedule in niceneasy Office as required as it gives you one off customers for next season!

Continue carding as per week two PLUS targeted areas.

***Week Commencing 16th March – Week Two***

Check niceneasy Office/dairy for one off tidy-up’s and contact customers. If work gained schedule in niceneasy Office as required.

Continue carding as per week two PLUS targeted areas.

***Week Commencing 23rd March – Week One***

As per above.

During scheduled visit give existing customers ‘Special Offer Letter’ for Lawn Care (if not already on carencut package).

Continue carding 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite.

***Week Commencing 30th March – Week Two***

Reschedule works to cater for Bank Holiday next week.

Check last year’s niceneasy Office/diary for first cut’s and one off tidy- up’s and schedule any works into your work schedules in niceneasy Office.

During scheduled visit give existing customers ‘Special Offer Letter’ for Lawn Care (if not already on carencut package).

Complete carding 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite . . . it shows reliability!

Apply Spring feeds as required.

Continue target area carding campaign

**April**

***Week Commencing 6th April – Week One***

Reschedule works to cater for Bank Holiday next week.

Apply Spring feeds as required.

Continue target areas carding campaign

 ‘Blast’ carding at Supermarket Car Parks, Hospital Car Parks, Railway Station Car Parks, and any other car park where there are a reasonable number of cars. A huge number of cards can be distributed quickly, and you can move on to the next car park. Yes you will get e few moans but that’s all.

***Week Commencing 13th April – Week Two***

Complete target areas carding campaign.

***Week Commencing 20rd April – Week One***

No marketing activity required

***Week Commencing 27th April – Week Two***

No marketing activity required

Reschedule works to cater for Bank Holiday next week

**May**

***Week Commencing 4th May – Week One***

No marketing activity required

***Week Commencing 11th May – Week Two***

No marketing activity required

During scheduled visit give existing customers ‘Special Offer Letter’ for Spot Weeding Lawns and/or New Turf (if not already on carencut package).

***Week Commencing 18th May – Week One***

Reschedule works to cater for Bank Holiday.

As above

***Week Commencing 25th May – Week Two***

Reassess/extend targeted areas and commence carding.

**June**

***Week Commencing 1st June – Week One***

During scheduled visit give existing customers ‘Special Offer Letter’ Summer Tidy-Up/ Hedge cutting/ Fence painting etc.

Card 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite.

Continue carding targeted areas (time permitting)

***Week Commencing 8th June – Week Two***

As above

***Week Commencing 15th June – Week One***

Card 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite.

Blast at carding targeted areas.

***Week Commencing 22nd June – Week Two***

Card 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite.

***Week Commencing 29th June – Week One***

Card 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite.

Continue with blast of carding targeted areas.

**July**

***Week Commencing 6th July – Week Two***

Card 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite.

***Week Commencing 13th July – Week One***

Summer Feed Letter to existing customers.

***Week Commencing 20th July – Week Two***

Summer Feed Letter to existing customers.

Blast at carding targeted areas

***Week Commencing 27th July – Week One***

No marketing activity required

**August**

***Week Commencing 3rd August – Week Two***

No marketing activity required

***Week Commencing 10th August – Week One***

Hedge Cutting Letter to existing customers

Start talking to Existing Customers about Scarification (Nov)

***Week Commencing 17th August – Week Two***

Reschedule works for Bank Holiday next week

Hedge Cutting Letter to existing customers

Start talking to Existing Customers about Scarification (Nov)

***Week Commencing 24th August – Week One***

No extra Promotional Work this week

***Week Commencing 31st August – Week Two***

**We must start marketing for Winter Work by NOW!**

Blast WINTER card at Targeted areas

Winter Card 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite

Push Scarification and Winter Lawn Care Services to Existing Customers

**September**

***Week Commencing 7th September – Week One***

Winter Services letter to existing customers with tick list

Winter Card 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite

Push Scarification and Winter Lawn Care Services to Existing Customers

***Week Commencing 14th September – Week Two***

Winter Card 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite

Push Scarification and Winter Lawn Care Services to Existing Customers

Housing 21 Ensure you are on Tender Listing

***Week Commencing 21st September – Week One***

Autumn/Winter Feed Letter to existing customers

Winter Card 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite

Push Scarification and Winter Lawn Care Services to Existing Customers

Continue targeted carding for winter works

Housing 21 Ensure you are on Tender Listing

***Week Commencing 28th September – Week Two***

Autumn/Winter Feed Letter to existing customers

Winter Card 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite

Commence Housing 21 Quotations

**October**

***Week Commencing 5th October – Week One***

Winter Card 6 houses either side of existing customers and 13 houses opposite

Gutter Clearing and Jet Washing Letter to existing customers

Housing 21 Quotations

***Week Commencing 12th October – Week Two***

Gutter Clearing and Jet Washing Letter to existing customers

Housing 21 Quotations

***Week Commencing 19th October – Week One***

Only a few days left for Christmas Tidy up letter to existing customers

Housing 21 Quotations

***Week Commencing 26th October – Week Two***

Only a few days left for Christmas Tidy up letter to existing customers

**November**

***Week Commencing 2nd November – Week One***

Commence Autumn Lawn Care Program

Hedge Reduction Letter to existing customers

Card 6 houses either side and 13 opposite customers

***Week Commencing 9th November – Week Two***

Continue Autumn Lawn Care Program

Hedge Reduction Letter to existing customers

Blast winter card at targeted areas

***Week Commencing 16th November – Week One***

Platinum Service Leaflet Distribution to Existing Customers

Blast winter card at targeted areas

***Week Commencing 23rd November***

Prepare for posting Christmas Cards on 1st December

Platinum Service Leaflet Distribution to Existing Customers

***Week Commencing 30th November***

Prepare Quotation for Platinum Services

Carry on winter carding campaign to targeted areas.

**December**

***Week Commencing 7th December***

Prepare Quotation for Platinum Services

Carry on winter carding campaign to targeted areas.

***Week Commencing 14th December***

Prepare Quotation for Platinum Services

Carry on winter carding campaign to targeted areas.

***Week Commencing 21st December***

Complete all outstanding works

Winter break from Thursday

# Additional MarketingIdeas

If you have the time and/or need to generate even more branding/business you can use additional promoting ideas that ‘tie in’ with the ‘standard’ campaigns you are running.

You can devise your plan as you wish and make it even more impactful by adding addition items to your campaign.

e.g. In April you are promoting grass cutting to potential customers by distributing Grass Cutting Cards. You can make your campaign more impactful by Local Newspaper 7 Magazine Advertising, Google +, Google Ads, Facebook Advertising, Social Internet Marketing and even planning a promotion at your local Garden Centre over Easter Weekend (over 4 days).

You can be as creative as you wish and spend a considerable amount if you so desire. If it is planned expenditure (as part of your marketing plan) ensure that you monitor your efforts to measure the profitability of the campaign.

# Monitoring

## Summary

**THE** most important part of **ANY** marketing and promotional campaigns you implement is to monitor the success or failure of a particular campaign.

The old saying;

***“I know I’m wasting half my Marketing Budget, the problem is I don’t know which half!”***

John Wanamaker (1838-1922)

For example in 1974 Dyno-Rod was the first company in the UK to take full page adverts in Yellow Pages (and the only company to do so that year). Whilst in the first year they were given a huge financial incentive to do so (Yellow Pages never discount!?!) they had to monitor the financial increase in business against the cost of placing the advertisement.

The increase in telephone calls amounted to 14% during office working hours and 26% out of hours. The combined increase in business more than covered the future 1975 cost of taking a full page in every Yellow Pages book!

Prontaprint ran a TV commercial campaign for a six week period. Franchisees ‘backed up’ the TV campaign by distributing leaflets to all the local businesses in their areas over the same six-week period in 1982. Group Sales rose by 34% over the following three months and unprompted awareness of the brand name was higher than Heinz Baked Beans. Did it, however, cover the cost of the TV campaign over the following three-month period . . . only just! The increase in sales over the year continued to rise so if a marketing man presented the facts . . . it was **very** successful. On the other hand the financial man could (and did) say another TV campaign could not be justified as it only just paid for itself on the first occasion and a second campaign could not be expected to show such significant results!

If you carry out several different campaigns (and they are all geared to increasing sales) you need to know how effectively each are working. You need to be able to analyse if each are being cost effective. If you cannot monitor an increase in business then you know the campaigns you are using are NOT being effective and therefore require further analysis.

For example, you distribute 10,000 lawn cutting cards in April and you receive 26 leads. From those leads you only gain 5 jobs . . . The campaign has worked well but, the sales follow through has not. The percentage of ‘sales closes’ against the number of leads the campaign generated is far too low and you can ascertain that you require more sales training.

On the other hand a newspaper advert fails to generate any leads, but all your customers say they have seen the advert. The campaign is NOT successful! Further analysis is required to ascertain if the media (the particular newspaper) is suitable (although as your existing customers have seen it, it should be), is it where the advert was placed in the newspaper (the are a variety of views about advert placement in a newspaper but ours is top outside right hand page), was it the size of the advert (was it lost amongst more prominent adverts) was it the message of the advert (advertising autumn lawn care in April will not generate much immediate business), was it the design of the advert (the impact of a well designed advert can be the difference between success and failure) or was the newspaper campaign simply too short (all newspaper campaigns should ideally be run over a six week period)? Each of these questions needs to be analysed to determine how to make your campaign more effective.

Radio Advertising in our business does increase brand awareness and is a useful marketing tool . . . is it affordable when we have so many more marketing tools at our disposal . . . almost certainly not!

How do you monitor any marketing campaign? You need to continually ask questions, of your potential customers, existing customers **AND** yourself!

Do not simply rely on what people tell you. Build a spread sheet and write everything down once you have the full picture Often you will see where and how improvements can and should be made.

## An Introduction to Marketing Metrics

Marketing Metrics have been used by ‘professional’ marketers for a number of years. They are used to monitor the return on investment of all aspects of any marketing campaign. Different Metrics are used to measure different campaigns. All metrics measure three types of results and all start with the following analysis however;

1. **Awareness**: The target audience knows something about your company, product or service.
2. **Perception:** The target audience thinks about your company, product or service in a certain way.
3. **Behaviour:** The target audience does something (i.e. Buys your service or product), or refrains from doing something (i.e. cancelling your service)

In this instant, however, we are only interested in ***Behaviour*** as that affects profitability!

## Definition of the term ‘Measurement’

By measure we mean a ***specific*** four step process;

1. **Defining**: Defining the results your promotion intends to promote.
2. **Assessing**: Assessing the £’s value of the potential results
3. **Tracking**: Tracking the actual results and determining if your program promoted them
4. **Adjusting**: Adjusting your promotion based on the tracking (doing more of what works well, doing less of what doesn’t work so well and stopping something that is not producing any results).

The above methodology is referred to as ‘The DATA process’.

Over time by using the DATA process continuously you ‘fine tune’ your marketing and promotional efforts to reach a conclusion on the most cost-effective programs.

## Practical Example

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tactic** | **Number of New Customers** | **Life Time Profit** | **Cost** | **% ROI** |
| 50,000 Carding | 35 | £21,000 | £3,500 | 600% |
| Local Newspaper Advertising | 2 | £1,200 | £150 | 800% |
| PR | 1 | £600 | £0 | 60,000% |
| Yell Pages | 1 | £600 | £850 | 70% |
| Rated People | 5 | £3,000 | £330 | 909% |

**Example of Calculations**

Costs of Carding: Printing, Distribution, incidental costs
Total £3,500.00

Life Time Value of a single customer = £3,080
(£22.00 lawn cut x 20 Cuts= £440 pa x 7 years= £3080.00

Profit over the life of a single customer = £780

So, number of new customers = 35

35 x £780 (profit) = £27,300

£27,300 (profit) divided by 3,500 (costs) = 7.8

7.8 x 100 = 780%

These are the TRUE values of obtaining a new customer. To calculate the value of gaining a new customer for the season (including one off’s) you need to calculate the profit received from each customer over the season, which will dramatically affect the figures.

From a cash flow viewpoint, it might be better to calculate the impact of a new customer over one season . . . although for longer term planning the method shown provides a more accurate assessment of the marketing/promotional percentage.

From the 50,000 card drop you actually only work for the 35 customers gained for an average of a six month period in their first season. Based on an average of £22.00 per fortnight your actual income will only increase by around £4,500 by the end of the first season. So, the actual cost of the card drop in the season is only just covered by the income received over the course of the season!

Perhaps the above illustration demonstrates the importance of selling other services to existing customers. If you can sell a Christmas Garden Tidy to half of your new customers at an average value of (say) £220 to just 17 of those new (now existing) you gain an additional £3,740 income (as importantly. . . over winter!) and the life time percentages also almost double. Suddenly distributing 50,000 cards seems more desirable!

Full Garden Maintenance will increase income even more, again providing regular income over the winter period! It is a service nicenstripy are being asked for even more in the current market, so take advantage of a fixed monthly fee.